

HICKAM FIELD, OFFICERS' HOUSING TYPE A
(Hickam Air Force Base, Building No. 517)
601 Boquet Boulevard
Honolulu
Honolulu County
Hawaii

HABS HI-164-P
HI-164-P

HABS
HI-164-P

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
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- Location:** 601 Boquet Boulevard
City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii
U.S.G.S. Pearl Harbor, Hawaii Quadrangle 1999 (7.5 minute series)
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates 04.607760.2359990.
- Significance:** Building 517 is a part of the early development of Hickam Air Force Base as the Army Air Corps expanded its operations in Hawaii before World War II. It was built during the first phase of housing construction, which began in 1937, and was designed with features that adapt it well to the Hawaiian climate.
- Description:** Building 517 is a two-story building in an irregular rectangular footprint with a side wing for the kitchen/ laundry area. The building has a double-pitch hip roof with open eaves and clipped rafter tails that is covered with clay tile. There are single-story sections at the kitchen/ laundry room area, rear of the family room, and attached garage which have single-pitch hip roofs. Another single-story section at the added screened porch has a low slope shed roof. The building is constructed of concrete hollow tiles on a concrete slab-on-grade. The dining room and kitchen/ laundry room areas are built on a concrete wall foundation that is vented by decorative tile vents and large screened openings. Building 517 typically has one-over-one-light double-hung sash windows with cast stone sills on the exterior. There are fixed-light sash with awning transoms in the family room. The front entry has a main door of five vertical boards and a six-panel screen door. The rear entry from the family room has three-light double doors with single-light transoms.
- At the rear of the building are irregularly-shaped concrete paving blocks set in concrete. One of the blocks has a pivoting metal loop which normally lies in a recess, flush with the surface of the paving. These same paving blocks and recess for a metal loop are found in the screen porch.
- The interior of Building 517 is typically carpeted, and has plaster walls and canec panel ceilings with painted wood splines in a centered pattern. The steps up from the living room and family room to the dining room have natural-finished oak treads and painted risers. The dining room floor is natural finished oak tongue-and-groove. The entry has added wood parquet flooring over the original acid-stained concrete. Also in the entry is an original telephone niche that is built into the wall. This has a phone recess about 12" wide and 1'-10" high above a 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high shelf for a phone book and a panel with a perforated design. The three-quarter-turn stairway to the second floor has carpet over wood treads and risers and a painted iron railing with $\frac{1}{2}$ " square vertical rails and curved decorations. Every other vertical rail is formed with a twist.

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The kitchen and laundry area has vinyl flooring, laminate countertops and single-panel wood cabinets. All bathrooms in the building have replacement ceramic tile floors, wainscots, and tub surrounds. The second floor typically has single-panel wood doors with glass doorknobs and metal escutcheon plates.

Building 517 has a separate, detached, single-story guest house with a hip roof covered in clay tiles, painted stucco-coated walls, and a concrete-slab-on-grade. The guest house has one-over-one-light double-hung sash windows. One of the entry doors is single-light over two-panel, and the other is three-light over two-panel. Both doors have two-panel screen doors. The interior of the guest house is two bedrooms and a common bathroom and typically has carpeted floors, plaster walls, and canec ceilings.

Historical Context: Building 517 was built in 1938. An aerial photo dated September 6, 1938 shows the building (U.S Army Museum Hawaii 1938). The guest house was not built as of this date, but it is presumed that it was constructed shortly after. Original plans for Building 517 are dated August 18, 1937 and were prepared under the direction of Howard B. Nurse, the Captain of the Quartermaster Corps at Hickam Field. Building 517 was part of the first phase of housing construction at Hickam Field which began in late 1937 (*Honolulu Star Bulletin* 1937, 1). This building was one of thirty-nine officers' quarters built under the first phase of housing construction and it was the only Type A building constructed. Construction was to begin after December 1, 1937. The project, which totaled eighty-one quarters for officers and non-commissioned officers was billed as "one of the most extensive housing projects ever undertaken in the territory" (*Honolulu Star Bulletin* 1937, 1).

Building 517 was part of the development of Hickam Air Base in the late 1930s and early 1940s as the Army Air Corps shifted its operations from Ford Island and utilized the larger area available to them in the new location. The housing planned for the new Air Base was designed "in keeping with the Hawaiian atmosphere and traditions" with some buildings placed on curving streets and amidst extensive landscaping plants, all planned to give a leisurely feeling to the community (Nurse 1938, 10).

The initial housing construction was done by Robert McKee Construction Company of Los Angeles CA. and was finished by July 1939 (*Honolulu Star Bulletin* 1936, 1; and Hunt ca. 1940, 6).

Building 517 has had a number of alterations since it was built. The rear wall of the original screened lanai was moved out about 7' and closed to form the family room in the enlarged space. A screened porch was constructed behind the garage. The kitchen has been enlarged by removing the original pantry wall, and cabinets, countertops, and fixtures have been replaced. The service wing was reconfigured, combining the service porch and the maid's room and creating a laundry area out of a portion of the new space and the former maid's closet.

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For additional information, see HABS HI-164-AP Hickam Field, Hickam Historic Housing.

Sources:

Hickam Air Force Base Plan Files. 1937. Historic Plans of unit type A, plan # 397-2861 and 397-2862. 18 August.

Honolulu Star Bulletin. 1936. "\$802,000 Low Bid For New Hickam Units." 28 April.

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J.M. Waller Associates and Mason Architects, Inc. 2003. *Building Preservation Plan of Selected Historic Homes for Hickam Air Force Base*. Honolulu: Hickam Air Force Base.

Nurse, Captain H. B. 1938. "Hickam Field, The Army's Newest and Largest Airdrome." *Air Corps Newsletter*, 15th ABW History Office, Hickam Air Force Base. 1 July.

U.S. Army Museum Hawaii. 1938. Aerial photo # 1445. Ft. DeRussy Archives, Hawaii. 6 September.

Project Information: This report was prepared as part of a project to privatize all military housing under the control of the 15 Airlift Wing. Approximately 656 of the 1332 base housing units to be privatized are within the Hickam Historic District. Because the units within the historic district will be altered, a representative unit of each type was selected for preservation; to be restored as part of the Programmatic Agreement (August 2000) for Hickam's Historic District. This report documents the buildings before their restoration. The photographic documentation was undertaken by David Franzen, photographer. Dee Ruzicka, Architectural Historian at Mason Architects, Inc., wrote the written documentation and conducted field work (November 2005 – February 2006) and research for this report.

Prepared by: Dee Ruzicka, Architectural Historian
Mason Architects, Inc.
119 Merchant Street, Suite 501
Honolulu, HI 96813

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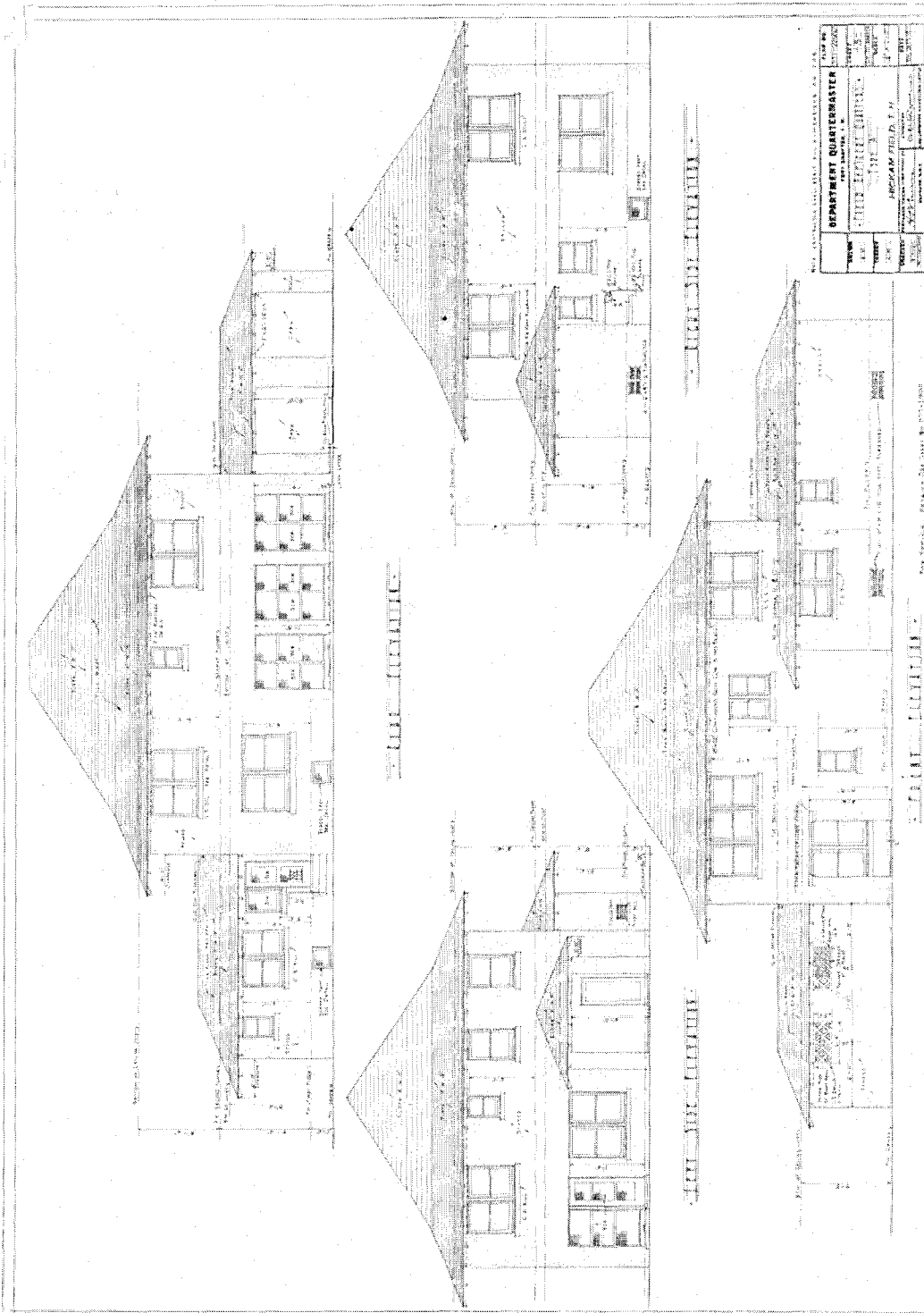
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Building 517 location map (not to scale)



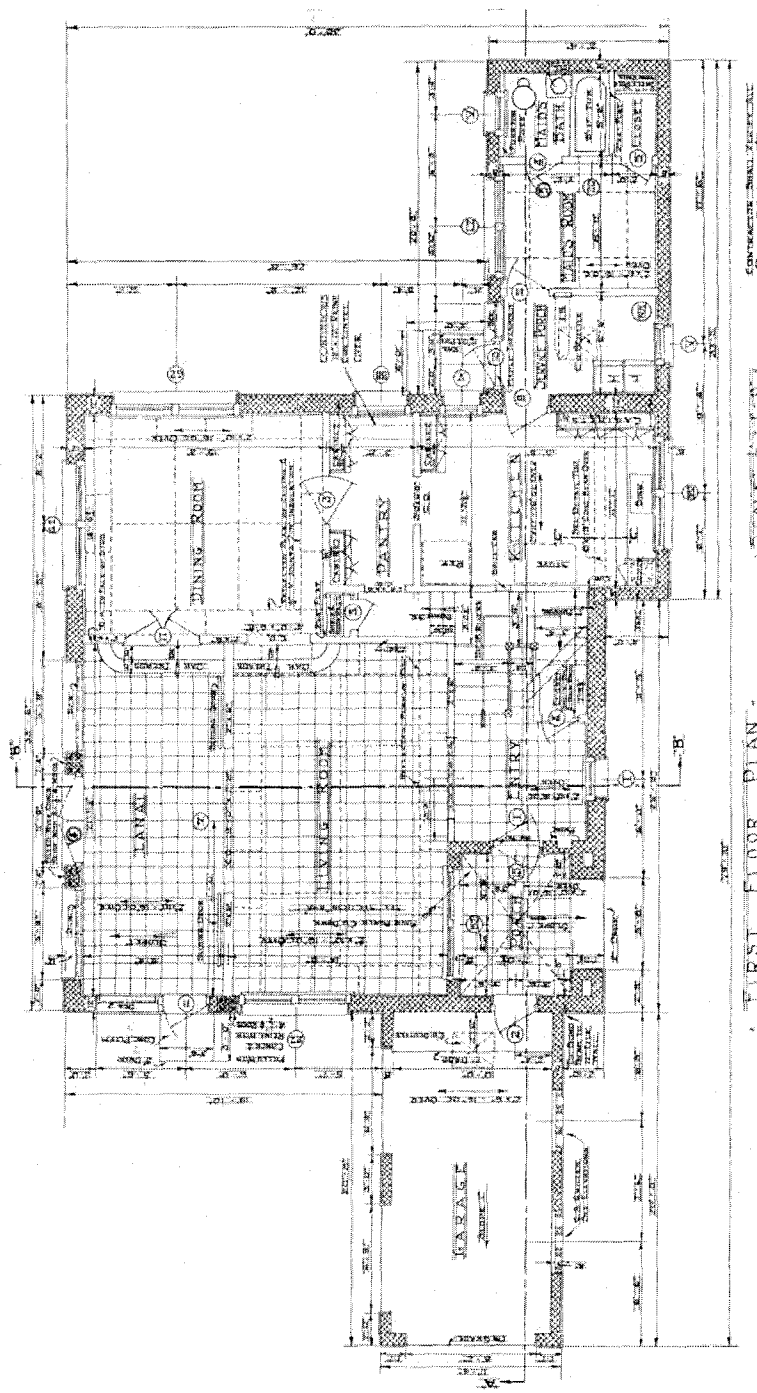
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Original elevation of Building 517, Type A. Hickam Air Force Base Plan Files 1937, 397-2862.



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Portion of original plan of Building 517, Type A, first floor plan. Hickam Air Force Base
Plan Files 1937, 397-2861.



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Portion of original plan of Building 517, Type A, second floor plan. Hickam Air Force Base Plan Files 1937, 397-2861.

